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Joint Inspection Unit

Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on experience with the follow-up system on Joint Inspection Unit reports and recommendations

Note by the Secretary-General**

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Experience with the follow-up system for Joint Inspection Unit reports and recommendations".

* A/56/150.

** The footnote requested by the General Assembly in resolution 54/248 was not included in the submission.

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Experience with the follow-up system for Joint Inspection Unit reports and recommendations

Report of the Joint Inspection Unit

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I. Background

1. The lack of a solid mechanism for follow-up on Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) reports and recommendations, with a systematic tracking of the status of implementation of recommendations, has been a long-standing concern of Member States as well as of the Unit itself. It has been the subject of a number of General Assembly resolutions, including:

(a) Resolution 2924 B (XXVII) of 24 November 1972, in which the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it an annual report on the implementation of JIU recommendations. That request was repeated in resolution 32/199 of 21 December 1977;

(b) Resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986, in which the General Assembly approved the report of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations (Group of 18). The Group of 18 recommended, among other things, that the competent and relevant bodies and organizations should ensure that JIU reports were adequately dealt with and the recommendations approved by them implemented, and that the other legislative organs of the organizations of the system should be invited, as called for in Assembly resolution 38/229 of 20 December 1983, when considering reports of the Unit, to indicate those recommendations they approved and those they did not;

(c) Resolution 42/218 of 21 December 1987, in which the General Assembly, being convinced that more systematic follow-up on the implementation of recommendations of JIU would increase the usefulness of the inspection function, particularly in encouraging constructive dialogue between the Unit and the various organizations of the United Nations system, requested the Unit to include in its annual report a section on its findings regarding the implementation of its recommendations;

(d) Resolution 44/184 of 19 December 1989, in which the General Assembly specified that the Secretary-General's report on implementation of JIU recommendations should include the recommendations of the Unit and related decisions of the Assembly and other governing bodies;

(e) Resolution 48/221 of 23 December 1993, in which the General Assembly called upon JIU to follow up on the implementation of its recommendations and to include the relevant information regularly in its annual reports;

(f) Most recently, resolution 50/233 of 7 June 1996, in which the General Assembly, having stressed that "the impact of the Unit on the cost-effectiveness of activities within the United Nations system is a shared responsibility of the Member States, the Unit and the secretariats of the participating organizations", encouraged "the Unit to continue to take the necessary steps to achieve a punctual and systematic follow-up of its recommendations as approved by the legislative organs of participating organizations".

2. Reflecting the concept of a shared responsibility stressed in resolution 50/233, JIU prepared a document entitled "Towards a more effective system of follow-up on reports of the Joint Inspection Unit", which was included as an annex to the annual report of the Unit for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997.[1] The system is based on the recognition that the value of a JIU report depends on effective follow-

up, which requires: (a) that the reports be given active and serious consideration and concrete action on the recommendations be taken by the legislative organs of the participating organizations; and (b) that there be expeditious implementation of the approved/accepted recommendations, with full reporting on the implementation measures and analysis on the resulting impact. The document therefore proposed procedures for tracking and reporting on these actions.

3. As a complement to the proposed follow-up system, JIU also prepared, during the course of 1999-2000, a series of notes on the handling of JIU reports by individual participating organizations, which were addressed to their respective executive heads. The notes were mainly intended to highlight shortcomings and best practices for the handling of reports and to facilitate the implementation of those elements of the proposed follow-up system falling within the competence of the secretariats of the participating organizations.

4. Meanwhile, the General Assembly by its resolution 54/16 of 29 October 1999, endorsed the follow-up system and invited the Unit to include in its annual reports approved recommendations that have not been implemented and requested that the system be implemented expeditiously and that the Unit report on experience with the system, including action taken and comments made by participating organizations, to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session. The present report has been prepared in response to that request.

II. Implementation of the follow-up system

A. General issues

5. Experience has shown that the major obstacle for the implementation of the follow-up system is the lack of specific legislative action on JIU recommendations. In particular, legislative organs often content themselves with "taking note" of the conclusions and recommendations of JIU reports, without clearly expressing whether or not these are "approved".

6. Unless clear approval action is taken by legislative organs, practically no effective follow-up is possible for the reasons indicated below:

(a) Under article 12 of the JIU statute, which constitutes the basis for implementation of JIU recommendations, "recommendations ... approved by ... competent organs" are generally interpreted as referring only to those approved through legislative action and not to those addressed to and accepted by executive heads without legislative action (see box below);

(b) An action of "take note", irrespective of interpretation of the term, does not legally bind the secretariat to ensuring an effective implementation or follow-up (see box below).

Implications of the items "Recommendations ... approved by ... competent organs" under article 12 of the JIU statute and "take note" used in resolutions and decisions of legislative organs

In early April 2001, JIU sent letters to all participating organizations requesting their views (interpretation) with regard to the terms "recommendations ... approved by ... competent organs" and "take note".

The replies received indicated that there were divergences in the organizations' understanding of both terms. While a majority stressed that "recommendations ... approved by ... competent organs" do not, from a legal viewpoint, include those addressed to and accepted by an executive head but only those approved through legislative action, others asserted, on the contrary, that "competent organ", under article 12 of the JIU statute, can include the secretariat. Similarly, for some organizations, the term "take note" clearly constituted approval (including, according to the United Nations Legal Counsel,[2] cases requiring legislative action but having no financial implications) or simply implied that there was no disagreement with the recommendations. Subsequently, however, by its decision 55/488, adopted on 7 September 2001, the General Assembly reiterated "that the terms 'take note of' and 'notes' are neutral terms that constitute neither approval nor disapproval", which is also the interpretation of several other organizations.

7. In the letter sent in April 2001 to all participating organizations, JIU also requested them to provide the necessary information requested by the General Assembly with regard to approved recommendations that have not been implemented. While several respondents indicated that there were no approved recommendations that had not been implemented, others noted that they could not report on implementation in the absence of a clearly agreed follow-up system.

8. From the foregoing, the following points can be flagged in order to ensure an effective follow-up of JIU reports and recommendations:

(a) It is necessary for the legislative organs to take specific action, such as approval or endorsement, on the JIU recommendations requiring legislative action by avoiding vague expressions such as "take note". In order to facilitate this, it is important for the secretariats to indicate clearly, when submitting JIU reports to the legislative organs together with their comments, which of the recommendations, in their opinion, need specific legislative action and which can be implemented by the executive heads without legislative action. This does not, however, preclude that recommendations addressed to the executive heads and their comments thereon may also be reviewed by the legislative organs, should they so wish;[3]

(b) It is also important, in this context, to reach a common understanding that recommendations addressed to and accepted by the executive heads must also be implemented and are subject to follow-up.[3]

9. Under the respective understandings reached or being discussed with participating organizations regarding follow-up of JIU reports and recommendations, as discussed in sections B and C below, it is expected that the interpretation of the term "recommendations ... approved by ... competent organs" will be clarified and that the ambiguous term "take note" will be eliminated. This, in turn, should allow JIU to report with greater ease and accuracy on the implementation of JIU reports/recommendations or lack thereof.

B. Organizations that have acted formally on the follow-up system

10. In addition to the United Nations, the follow-up system has already been acted upon formally by the legislative organs of four specialized agencies, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). Among these four specialized agencies, UNESCO, UNIDO and WHO have de facto endorsed the follow-up system approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 54/16. In the case of ILO, however, the nature of the decision differs from those taken at UNESCO, UNIDO and WHO, reflecting partly the complexity relating to the tripartite nature of ILO's governance structure. While the process of discussing, in particular with WHO and UNIDO, and of adopting new follow-up procedures for reports by the JIU was in itself beneficial, it is still too early to judge whether these new procedures will actually ensure an effective and more systematic follow-up to the JIU reports. Details are provided in the following paragraphs.

United Nations

11. Since the General Assembly endorsed the JIU proposed follow-up system in October 1999, 12 JIU reports have been submitted to the Secretary-General for action. Requirements regarding the timely provision of comments on the reports by the Secretary-General and/or the Administrative Committee on Coordination, in accordance with article 11, paragraph 4, of the JIU statute, have been largely met, as has the requirement to list JIU reports under the appropriate substantive agenda items of the programme of work.

12. In accordance with the provisions of a number of resolutions, including 2924 B (XXVII) and 44/184, as well as decision 50/470 of 23 December 1995, the Secretary-General continues to submit a report regularly to the General Assembly on the implementation of the recommendations of JIU. The last such report was submitted on 16 August 1999 (A/54/223), and a report is being submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session (A/56/135). These reports, however, do not provide systematic and detailed coverage of all approved or accepted JIU recommendations, as required by the follow-up system, nor, indeed, do they address all JIU reports of relevance to the United Nations, but rather a number of reports, the choice of which appears arbitrary in the absence of any explanation of selection criteria. Since the adoption by the General Assembly of the follow-up system, no formal mechanism has yet been put in place with regard to specific requirements, such as expeditious implementation of approved/accepted recommendations and full and timely reporting.

13. One related measure taken recently by the Secretary-General has been the establishment of the Accountability Panel, with effect from 1 November 2000, for the purpose of strengthening accountability in the Secretariat (ST/SGB/2000/14). The Accountability Panel will ensure that the findings of oversight bodies, including JIU, are addressed by the Secretariat "from a systematic perspective". Its main functions include a review of the analysis of significant management issues to be prepared annually by the Department of Management, based on the reports of the oversight bodies, and to identify actions required to remedy accountability issues raised. The Unit welcomes this initiative and believes that the Panel can play a role in ensuring that appropriate action is taken by the Secretariat in respect of those recommendations addressed to and accepted by the Secretary-General.

International Labour Organization

14. At its 273rd session in November 1998, the ILO Governing Body took a decision to defer consideration of the JIU proposed follow-up system until the General Assembly had acted thereon.

15. The Unit sent a note to the Director General of ILO (JIU/NOTE/99/3) in September 1999, summarizing the practices of ILO handling of JIU reports and presenting concrete recommendations for improving the consideration of JIU reports by the ILO Governing Body. Through its covering letter, JIU sought to meet with the Executive Head and other officials of ILO to discuss details of this issue and to see to what extent a common understanding could be reached.

16. A first preliminary meeting took place in December 1999, at which the Unit proposed a working meeting to discuss those issues that might have to be agreed upon bilaterally, in particular with regard to a methodology for determining the relevance of a JIU report and the subsequent tracking of its recommendations. The ILO secretariat, in the meantime, presented its unilateral comments on the follow-up issues to the Governing Body at its 277th session in March 2000,[4] without addressing the issues mentioned above. The ILO Governing Body, upon the recommendation of its Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee, subsequently "... agreed that the JIU proposals concerning follow-up on its reports be implemented by ILO in the manner indicated in [the secretariat] document,[4] although, in the opinion of the Unit, the content of this document basically aims at maintaining the status quo.

17. Further, in May 2001, during the process of gathering data for the purposes of the present report, the Unit was informed by the ILO Governing Body that the organization had not yet approved a follow-up system on the JIU's recommendations and that it was not possible to state if a particular JIU recommendation has been implemented or not. Therefore, while the follow-up system has been acted upon by the Governing Body, specific issues remain to be clarified and agreed upon, necessitating continued dialogue between the ILO secretariat and JIU.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

18. UNESCO's long-standing practices for the distribution of JIU reports, for selecting reports to be taken up by the Executive Board and for allocating sufficient time for the examination of those reports by the Board can be considered as among the best.

19. In addition, at its 154th session in April/May 1998, the Executive Board, having examined the JIU annual report,[1] invited the Director-General to submit to it a regular report on the implementation of the recommendations made by JIU concerning UNESCO, as approved by the Board, and requested the Director-General to report to it at its 155th session in October/November 1998 on UNESCO's cooperation with JIU. At its 155th session, having examined the subsequent report submitted by the Director-General, the Executive Board of UNESCO approved guidelines for the organization's cooperation with JIU, indicating, inter alia, that the Director-General should invite representatives of JIU to attend all public meetings of the General Conference and the Executive Board and their subsidiary bodies as observers and to present their reports to members of the Board. The Executive Board also decided that it would either adopt or reject any JIU recommendation and that the Director-General would submit to it a regular report on the implementation of the recommendations that have been approved by the Board.[5] These guidelines, when implemented, can go a long way towards ensuring active consideration and effective follow-up of JIU reports by the organization.

20. However, this decision has not been fully applied. In the five sessions that have been held since the adoption by the Board of these guidelines, 10 reports of JIU were forwarded by the secretariat to the Board for consideration. In seven of those 10 cases, the Board simply took note of the conclusions and recommendations of the reports, without specifically endorsing or rejecting them. In three cases, however, the Board endorsed part or all of the recommendations. In at least two of these cases, JIU reports have led to direct and concrete changes of policy or procedures at UNESCO, as indicated in follow-up documents issued by the secretariat.

21. In order to provide more consistency in the consideration and follow up of JIU reports, and as the basis for dialogue between the UNESCO secretariat and JIU to this effect, a draft understanding similar to that reached with WHO and UNIDO was sent recently to the UNESCO secretariat and should be finalized in the coming weeks.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

22. A pilot scheme for follow-up to JIU recommendations was prepared jointly by the secretariat and JIU during the course of 2000-2001, and endorsed by the Industrial Development Board at its twenty-fourth session on 22 June 2001.[6] The provisions of the JIU statute and the follow-up system approved by the General Assembly are clearly referred to as constituting the basic framework for the scheme, which also takes into account the follow-up procedure adopted earlier by the WHO Executive Board (see below). It includes basic criteria for determining the relevance of reports to UNIDO, a description of procedures for the distribution and consideration of the reports and the recommended format for the presentation of the documents submitted by the UNIDO secretariat to the Board concerning JIU reports.

23. In addition, the Director-General is committed to regularly submitting status reports to the Industrial Development Board concerning the measures taken on the implementation of approved recommendations ["through policy-making organs"]. It is also foreseen that the follow-up of JIU recommendations will be supported by the new UNIDO oversight recommendations tracking system, to be installed in 2001.

24. This scheme is subject to review and adjustment, as warranted by experience in its actual application, and in consultation with JIU.

World Health Organization

25. At its 106th session, on 22 May 2000, the Executive Board of WHO endorsed follow-up procedures for reports by JIU, prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Unit.[7] The procedures covered basically the same issues as in the case of UNIDO as indicated above. Two sessions of the Executive Board have since been held; the 107th session in January 2001 and the 108th session in May 2001. In both cases, the item of JIU reports was taken up first by the Audit Committee of the Board, as provided for in the adopted follow-up procedures.

26. In January 2001, the secretariat forwarded four of seven reports submitted by the JIU to the Audit Committee for discussion. The recommendations of the JIU reports were presented in matrix form, together with the secretariat's comments thereon. For each recommendation, the secretariat indicated clearly whether it required legislative action. The Audit Committee reported to the Executive Board on its process of consideration of the JIU reports, stating in particular that it would now request that JIU reports, as and when they were finalized, should be sent to individual members of the Committee, together with the response by the secretariat.[8] The Committee, however, did not forward any substantive comments on the reports to the Board, which took no formal action on the reports or the recommendations.

27. In May 2001, the Audit Committee requested that in the future, the secretariat should divide JIU recommendations into three groups, it being understood that consideration by the Committee will focus mainly on the recommendations in the second and third categories:

(a) Those with which the secretariat agreed;

(b) Those on which the secretariat had some reservations but where a common understanding could be reached;

(c) Those on which the secretariat disagreed with JIU.

28. Consequently, discussion on the two JIU reports that had been presented by the secretariat were postponed until the next meeting of the Audit Committee. It should be noted, however, that contrary to its presentation to the 107th session, the secretariat did not indicate clearly in its presentation to the 108th session which recommendations required legislative action.

C. Status of consideration of the follow-up system in other participating organizations

1. Specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency

29. A dialogue has been initiated by JIU with the other specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the adoption of a similar follow-up system. Suggested texts outlining common understanding of the system have been sent out by JIU to all the secretariats, with a view to facilitating their eventual consideration by the legislative organs of these participating organizations. While the provisions of the JIU statute and the follow-up system endorsed by the

General Assembly constitute the basic framework for all these texts, they have been tailored to take into account the specific character of each organization, with a clear understanding that they are subject to review and adjustment as warranted by experience. Discussions are ongoing and are progressing satisfactorily in most cases, as detailed below.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

30. The proposed JIU follow-up system included in the JIU annual report[1] was considered by the Programme and Finance Committees of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in the autumn of 1998 on behalf of the FAO Council. No members of the Committees objected to it and, therefore, according to the FAO secretariat, the follow-up system is considered to have been accepted by the FAO legislative organs, and the secretariat has confirmed its readiness to implement it.

31. Subsequent to the above, a meeting took place in May 2000 between JIU and the FAO secretariat with a view to arriving at a common understanding on the modalities of implementation of the proposed follow-up system. JIU is now awaiting a response from the FAO secretariat on a draft document outlining the understanding, which was sent to FAO in April 2001 to facilitate the process.

International Civil Aviation Organization

32. In a letter dated 2 October 2000, the secretariat of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) indicated that it accepted most of the recommendations contained in the note on the "Handling of JIU reports by ICAO" (JIU/NOTE/99/10). It agreed, in particular, that working papers submitted by the secretariat to the ICAO Council on JIU reports would clearly state the position of the Secretary General of ICAO with respect to each recommendation. In addition, the secretariat committed itself to monitoring the implementation of JIU recommendations accepted by its Secretary General and reporting the results to the Council annually.

33. A draft document on follow-up of JIU reports has also been sent to the ICAO secretariat, with a view to arriving at a clearer understanding between the secretariat and the Unit on a number of issues involved.

International Maritime Organization

34. It has been the practice of the secretariat of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to suggest in its submissions on JIU reports to its Council that the latter take note of the information contained in the document, and to comment or decide, as it may deem appropriate. The note on "Handling of JIU reports by IMO" (JIU/NOTE/2000/1) called on the Secretary-General of IMO to encourage the Council to take more specific decisions on each of the pertinent recommendations contained in the JIU reports.

35. At its 80th session, in June 1998, the Council endorsed the intention of the Secretary-General to make every effort to observe the new procedures contained in the annex to the JIU annual report,[1] at least in respect of the JIU reports that are of direct relevance to the work of IMO. In order to provide concrete mechanisms through which this positive stance by the organization towards implementation/

follow-up could materialize, a proposed understanding for follow-up was sent out to the IMO secretariat in June 2001. The Unit is now awaiting comments by the IMO secretariat on the draft text.

International Telecommunication Union

36. The JIU note entitled "Handling of JIU reports by ITU" (JIU/NOTE/99/6) was sent to the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) by JIU in late 1999.

37. Subsequently, the Secretary-General of ITU proposed to report to the 2000 session of Council on the five recommendations contained in that note,[9] and a meeting took place on 17 July 2000 between the ITU secretariat and JIU to discuss the document. Based on the discussion at the meeting, the Unit, in its letter dated 18 July 2000 to the Secretary-General, which was submitted in turn to the Council as document C2000/53, requested that no action be taken at the 2000 session of Council pending further discussions. The Council agreed to defer discussion of the subject.[10]

38. In the meantime, JIU sent a draft understanding entitled "Follow-up on JIU reports", to the ITU secretariat in April 2001, to be used as the basis for further discussion on the subject. After a constructive dialogue held in May 2001, it was decided that a proposal on the follow-up system, to be agreed upon between JIU and the ITU secretariat after further consultations, would be submitted to the 2002 session of the Council.

Universal Postal Union

39. A note on "Handling of JIU reports by UPU" (JIU/NOTE/99/7) was sent to the Director-General of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in December 1999, with which the Director-General fully concurred in his letter of 11 January 2000. Subsequent to the above, however, a summary of the recommendations contained in the note was submitted as part of a document (CA 2000 — Doc. 26) to the Council of Administration, held in October 2000, in which a certain reservation by the secretariat was included.

40. Accordingly, a meeting between the UPU secretariat and JIU was held in February 2001 and, based on this, a suggested understanding on follow-up was sent to the UPU secretariat for comments. The secretariat is currently examining this proposal.

World Intellectual Property Organization

41. A note, "Handling of JIU reports by WIPO" (JIU/NOTE/99/5), was sent to the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in November 1999. Following preliminary talks on the issue held between JIU and the WIPO secretariat, the former submitted a draft understanding to the Director General in May 2001, as the basis for future dialogue between the WIPO secretariat and JIU. JIU is presently awaiting comments by the WIPO secretariat on the text proposed.

World Meteorological Organization

42. After the adoption of resolution 54/16 by the General Assembly, discussions were initiated between JIU and the WMO secretariat in order to improve handling of JIU reports and bring about a systematic implementation of the JIU proposed follow-up system. The WMO secretariat explicitly stated its view that the proposed follow-up system is "found reasonable and [is] being followed by WMO as appropriate".[11]

43. Discussions are ongoing between JIU and the WMO secretariat, based on a draft understanding prepared by JIU and sent to the secretariat in April 2001. A report on this matter is expected to be submitted by the WMO secretariat to the fifty-fourth session of the Executive Council in 2002.

International Atomic Energy Agency

44. While members of the Board of Governors are informed of all JIU reports through an information circular issued once a year, JIU reports are not distributed, but are provided to Member States upon request only. To date, no JIU reports have been taken up by IAEA legislative organs.

45. Preliminary discussions were held in June 2000 between JIU and the secretariat of IAEA, based on a note, "Handling of JIU reports by IAEA" (JIU/NOTE/2000/4), which was sent to the IAEA secretariat in May 2000. In June 2001, JIU also sent a draft agreement for follow-up on JIU reports to the IAEA secretariat. It is expected that further discussions will be held shortly with a view to reaching agreement on a final text.

2. United Nations funds and programmes

46. As subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly, the United Nations funds and programmes are bound by the former's decisions and resolutions. Thus, JIU does not need to seek separate approval from their governing bodies on recommendations that the General Assembly has already endorsed and has only to submit for action to the governing bodies those reports and/or recommendations that have a specific bearing on the activities of those organizations. In this latter context, there are of course instances where reports and/or recommendations are dealt with, in the first place, directly by the governing bodies of the funds and programmes.

47. As is clear from the above, the United Nations funds and programmes are bound de jure by resolution 54/16, which endorsed the JIU follow-up system. In practice, however, discussions between JIU and the fund and programme secretariats (and formal endorsement, if necessary, by their governing bodies) could greatly facilitate the actual implementation of the follow-up system. The Unit, therefore, has also engaged into a dialogue with most of these entities in order to reach a common understanding on concrete modalities for effecting the system.

United Nations Development Programme

48. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has taken no separate legislative action on the JIU follow-up system. In order to facilitate implementation by UNDP of the JIU follow-up system, a note on "Handling of JIU reports by UNDP" (JIU/NOTE/99/8) was submitted to the Administrator of UNDP in

December 1999. Additionally, in June 2001, JIU submitted a draft understanding to be used as the basis for dialogue between JIU and the UNDP secretariat. Although the UNDP secretariat has already informally expressed its agreement with the thrust of the draft, JIU is waiting for official comments by UNDP at the time of writing of the present report.

United Nations Population Fund

49. Similarly, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has not taken any legislative action on the follow-up system approved by the General Assembly.

50. In June 2001, JIU sent a draft agreement to UNFPA, similar to that sent to UNDP. At the time of writing of the present report, no comment had been received from the UNFPA secretariat on the draft agreement.

51. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has not taken any separate legislative action on the follow-up system approved by the General Assembly.

52. Dialogue between JIU and the UNHCR secretariat has just started, on the basis of a draft understanding that was sent to UNHCR in early June 2001.

United Nations Children's Fund

53. Discussions were conducted between the secretariat of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and JIU during the course of 2000 through means of the JIU note, "Handling of the JIU reports by UNICEF" (JIU/NOTE/99/9), which was sent to the Executive Director of UNICEF in December 1999.

54. Based on these discussions, the secretariat submitted recommendations containing a few elements on handling/follow-up of JIU reports to the first regular session of the Executive Board in January 2000, which were in turn adopted by the Board. Since some points remain to be clarified, however, discussions are ongoing, using, as a basis, a proposed text that was sent to the UNICEF secretariat.

World Food Programme

55. In January 2000, JIU requested information from the secretariat of the World Food Programme (WFP) on action proposed or taken by WFP on the follow-up system endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 54/16. The JIU note entitled "Handling of JIU reports by WFP" (JIU/NOTE/2000/2) was also sent to the Executive Director of WFP in February 2000. In her letter of 3 March 2000, the Executive Director informed the Unit that the recommendations contained in the note, including the follow-up system endorsed by the General Assembly, had been referred to the Bureau of the Executive Board for review.

56. Subsequently, the WFP secretariat, making reference to the endorsed follow-up system submitted to the Executive Board at its second regular session in May 2000 for consideration and approval, proposed possible changes to the WFP current procedures on follow-up/handling of JIU reports.[12] In the meantime, a meeting took place between the WFP secretariat and JIU prior to the session of the Executive Board in May 2000, at which the Board decided to simply take note of the information on follow-up required by JIU and encouraged the secretariat and the Unit to continue discussions with a view to developing a system of follow-up to the

JIU recommendations. The Board looked forward to reviewing the matter in due course.[13] Pursuant to the decision, in March 2001, JIU sent a draft understanding on follow-up to JIU reports/recommendations to the WFP secretariat for possible submission to the Executive Board at its second regular session of May 2001.

57. The WFP secretariat felt, however, that more time would be required for detailed consideration. Meanwhile, the Executive Board decided to encourage the Secretariat to continue its discussions with JIU to strengthen the follow-up system currently in place.[14] The understanding between JIU and the WFP secretariat will be finalized shortly.

III. Suggested action by the General Assembly

58. The General Assembly may wish to adopt the following draft resolution:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Having examined* the report of the Joint Inspection Unit, hereafter referred to as the Unit, on its experience with the follow-up system on its reports and recommendations,[15]

"*Invites* the legislative organs of those participating organizations of the Unit that have not yet done so to endorse the follow-up system contained in annex I of the Unit's annual report for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997,[16]

"*Requests* the Unit to submit a second report on its experience with the follow-up system on its reports and recommendations to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session."

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 34* (A/52/34).

[2] A/C.5/55/42, annex II.

[3] It is to be noted, in this context, that it has been the practice of JIU to segment its recommendations into two categories: those addressed to the legislative organs and those to the executive heads.

[4] ILO document GB.277/PFA/7/2.

[5] 154 EX/decision 7.9.3 and 155 EX/decision 8.10.3; see UNESCO documents 154 EX/SR.1 and 155 EX/SR.11.

[6] UNIDO document IDB.24/18, Activities of the Joint Inspection Unit, 26 April 2001 and decision IBD.24/11.

[7] WHO document EB106/6, reports of the Joint Inspection Unit: follow-up procedures, 26 April 2000.

[8] Report of the third meeting of the WHO Audit Committee of the Executive Board, EBAC3/7, 12 January 2001.

[9] ITU document C2000/23, 22 June 2000.

[10] ITU document C2000/97, para. 4, 22 September 2000.

[11] EC-L/Doc.18, appendix C, para. 2.

[12] WFP document WFP/EB.2/2000/8 (para. 3 and annexes I and II) of 11 April 2000, entitled "Reports by the Joint Inspection Unit relevant to the work of the World Food Programme and the Executive Board".

[13] See WFP/EB.2/2000/11 of 19 May 2000 and decision 2000/EB.2/18.

[14] WFP documents WFP/EB.2/2001/8 of 6 April 2001, WFP/EB.2/2001/11 of 18 May 2001 and decision 2001/EB.2/23.

[15] A/56/356.

[16] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 34* (A/52/34).